LEVEL II

Research Memorandum 66-4

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COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS OF
THE ARMY CIVILIAN PERSONNEL PROGRAM
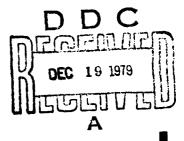
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Research Memorandum 66-4

COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS
OF THE ARMY CIVILIAN PERSONNEL PROGRAM

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FOREWORD

The CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RESEARCH Task of the U. S. Army Personnel Research Office seeks to achieve for the Army a better understanding of factors important to smooth working civilian personnel operation and to more effective military-civilian team operation.

During FY 1964 and 1965, research was conducted under contract on selected aspects of civilian personnel management: the impact of the civilian executive on the nature of the position he occupies, motivation factors for civilian research and development personnel, and local factors which affect selection of first line supervisors. As a next area of study, contract efforts were extended to studies of communications media and content as applied to civilian personnel management.

A contract was negotiated with the American Institutes for Research to conduct a preliminary study of problems in written communications. The present Research Memorandum gives a detailed account of interviews with key civilian personnel staff members at selected installations concerning understanding of and response to specific communications from Department of the Army Civilian Personnel headquarters. Two experiments in which certain characteristics of the communications problem were quantified are also reported.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SUMMARY

This publication describes procedures used in a study of communication effectiveness. The study involved communications from the Army Office of Civilian Personnel to its operating personnel offices. In the initial phase of the project four specific communications were studied. These messages concerned the training of executives and managers, the employment of youths for summer jobs, the registration of certain civilian employees in career programs, and the preparation of a written report concerning certain personnel programs. Visits were made to twenty operating offices and to eleven field offices and command headquarters to obtain information concerning the actions taken and the problems arising with these specific communications. The installations visited were selected to be representative of Army personnel offices within the continental United States. The variety of problems uncovered during this case study phase of the project should include the important kinds of communications problems within this setting.

It was found that in general the messages were understood by the operating office staffs. However, variation was found in the responses made to these communications. The factors influencing these variations are organized and discussed under the following six categories: the importance of the command offices and commanding officer, the communication channels, the skills of the Civilian Personnel Officer and his staff, the local conditions in the community, the personnel program evaluation system, and the knowledge of influences affecting policy generating offices. It is concluded that the major problems are associated not so much with the local office correctly interpreting the content of a message, but rather with the optimal way of administering Army policy within the local installation context.

In the second phase of the project two experiments were conducted. Edited sections of narrative reports from ten installations and six sub commands were rated by key headquarters staff members. The ratings concerned the responsiveness of the report to the questions asked by headquarters, the usefulness of the reported information for command and headquarters staff, and the excellence of the administration of the local program as judged from the written report. The information contained in these ratings raises some questions as to the usefulness of these narrative reports to the headquarters staff.

The second experiment concerned a comparison of two procedures of obtaining nominations for a training course from the installation personnel offices. The characteristics of those nominated under one procedure were compared with the characteristics of those nominated using a revised system. The change in procedure did not produce marked changes in the characteristics of the individuals nominated.

Recommendations for improving the effectiveness of communications within the Office of Civilian Personnel include several general suggestions as well as some areas for continued research. It appears to be unnecessary for the headquarters office to expend additional efforts in improving and editing messages sent to the field. These communications seem to convey the information to the recipient. However, it is suggested that additional background information concerning conditions at headquarters and in the the field are required by both policy-directing and policy-using personnel men. An increase in both face-to-face exchanges and informal written communications seems appropriate.

Some areas for additional research are suggested. These studies should focus upon the development of criteria of communication effectiveness and alternate communication techniques.

INTRODUCTION

Effective communication of policy information between a headquarters
and remote installations is a source of concern among all complex organi-
zations. The civilian personnel program of the U. S. Army is no exception.
Staff members of the Office of Civilian Personnel feel that the written
communications which they prepare for their operating personnel offices
do not consistently produce the desired response or implementation of
the message at the installation level. The project described in this
report was directed toward investigating the general communication
problems of the Office of Civilian Personnel in order to define areas
in which additional experimental attacks could produce general principles
of communication which in turn could improve the effectiveness of the
communication network.

An effective communication network is difficult to attain since its
success is determined by such a large number of factors. These factors
can include such things as the goals of the originator of the message,
the message content and wording, the transmission channels of the mes-
sage, the goals and attitudes of the recipient, and the responses made
by the recipient. Effective communication for the Army civilian personnel
program is concerned with assuring that the goals of the sender will have
a high probability of being achieved at the installation level. Other
researchers dealing with communication effectiveness have suggested that
the characteristics of the sender and the recipient of a message can
introduce barriers that decrease the probability of an optimal response.
Some of these critical differences are listed below:

   1. Differences in the organizational goals, structure, and manage-
      ment style.

2. Differences in the personal goals and characteristics of the individuals in the communication network.

3. Differences in the involvement of the parties in the network with the problems considered in the message.

4. The complexity of the channels through which the communication is sent.

From these kinds of statements that classify barriers to effective communication, one would predict, for example, that communications dealing with programs that are popular with field installations would be more effectively communicated than would a message concerning an unpopular program. Or, in the Army civilian personnel setting, one would predict that a policy statement originating at the Civil Service Commission level would be more difficult to transmit through channels to the field than a similar policy originating at a sub command office. Although these statements and examples may at first appear to be relatively trivial, the ways in which the goals and involvement of the individuals at the ends of the communication chain can be manipulated so that optimal effectiveness is achieved is a basic research problem. Identifying the locus of current communications problems is the first step in such a program.

This study is an initial step in focusing attention on the specific communications problems that appear to be amenable to research treatment and remedial actions. Therefore, a sample of messages sent to installations was selected for intensive study at a sample of installations. The responses of these installations and the responses anticipated by the sender of the messages were studied. Variations in the installation responses are described. Several of the implications of these variations led to tentative recommendations concerning ways in which communication effectiveness might be increased. The evaluation of some of the recommendations through experimental attacks on these problems is considered to be the important next step in improvement of the communication system. Two small experiments were conducted during the project to illustrate the feasibility of these methods in studying communications problems.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase visits were made to operating personnel offices and command personnel offices to obtain information about a variety of communications problems. The purpose of the visits was to attempt to define the areas in which research results could potentially be most useful to the Army civilian personnel program. In order to limit the areas of study to reasonably manageable proportions, it was agreed that the emphasis of the study at field locations would concern communications from the Office of Civilian Personnel (OCP) to the installations.

The second phase of the project involved two small experimental studies to demonstrate the feasibility of these research methods in measuring variations in communications and differential responses to directives. The experiments used communications that were sent to the field and responses obtained from the field during the time of the contract.

Communications Case Studies

A representative sample of installations was visited during the first eight months of the project. Visits were made to twenty operating civilian personnel offices; each visit required approximately two working days. A typical sequence of events at an installation began with an initial interview with the Civilian Personnel Officer. This discussion involved a general description of the project and the kinds of information desired. It also included some specific discussion of the installation, its mission, the size of the civilian personnel staff, the size of the work force serviced, its relationship to headquarters, etc. A schedule for working with the personnel staff to minimize

interference with their ongoing activities was planned. Then interviews were held with individuals or small work groups within the personnel office concerning four written communications.

Eleven staff personnel offices were also visited by the project staff. This number includes three Field Offices of the Office of Civilian Personnel. At these offices one to four hours were spent in discussing the actions of the staff office and attitudes of staff members toward their role in the communication network.

Sample of Installations. The sample of operating personnel offices was selected to be representative of a number of variables. These twenty offices varied in size, mission, geographical region, distance from their headquarters, and complexity of the commands represented in the personnel services. Table 1 lists the offices visited, the major command and the mission of the installation, and the approximate number of civilian personnel serviced. Table 2 lists the staff and field offices visited. This list includes a number of sub command headquarters, major command headquarters, and field offices of the Office of Civilian Personnel, Department of Army. When these offices were selected, port facilities and procurement districts were being phased out of the jurisdiction of OCP; therefore, they were not included in the population from which the sample was drawn. This sample is reasonably representative of Army operating civilian personnel offices within the continental United States and provides a sufficient variety of installations so that a reasonably complete listing of the important communication problems of concern to the Office of Civilian Personnel could be obtained.

Sample of Communications. Four communications were selected for detailed description of problems and actions taken at each of the operating civilian personnel offices. The criteria used in the selection of messages for this portion of the project were: (1) specific action was required of the operating Civilian Personnel Office; (2) at least one specific written response was required; (3) the message was a relatively recent communication; and (4) various content areas were sampled so that at each installation several members of the personnel staff would be involved in the study. The selected messages and the type of questions

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TABLE 1

Operating Civilian Personnel Offices Visited

Operating Personnel Office	Region	Major Command/ Mission	Approximate Size
Army Tank Automotive Center	Midwestern	AMC/Manufacturing	6000
Atlanta Army Depot	Southern	AMC/Supply	3000
Fort Benjamin Harrison	Midwestern	Audit/Finance	6000
Fort Benning	Southern	CONARC/Troops	3300
Fort Carson	Western	CONARC/Troops	1670
Fort Devens	Eastern	CONARC/Troops	1880
Fort Lee	Southern	CONARC/School	2500
Fort MacArthur	Western	CONARC/Troops	1060
Fort Sam Houston	Southern	CONARC/Troops	3000
Granite City Army Depot	Midwestern	AMC/Supply	1300
Jefferson Proving Ground	Midwestern	AMC/Test	475
Nashville Engineering District	Southern	CofE/Civil Works	1020
New York Engineering District	Eastern	CofE/Civil Works	900
Presidio	Western	CONARC/Troops	3500
Rock Island Arsenal	Midwestern	AMC/Manufacturing	4700
Sierra Army Depot	Western	AMC/Supply	1000
Valley Forge General Hospital	Eastern	MC/Hospital	520
Watervliet Arsenal	Eastern	AMC/Manufacturing	2800
Waterways Experiment Station	Southern	CofE/Civil Works	1250
Yuma Proving Ground	Western	AMC/Test	710

TABLE 2

Headquarters and Field Offices Visited

Headquarters	Region
AMC Headquarters	Eastern
Corps of Engineers	Eastern
Fourth Army Headquarters	Southern
Lower Mississippi Valley Engineer Division	Southern
Mobility Command Headquarters	Midwestern
North Atlantic Engineer Division	Eastern
Sixth Army Headquarters	Western
Weapons Command Headquarters	Midwestern

Field Offices	Region
Chicago Field Office	Midwestern
Dallas Field Office	Southern
San Francisco Field Office	Western

posed by the project staff in obtaining these case study data are discussed in the following paragraphs.

1. Youth Opportunity Campaign. The relatively large number of communications concerned with the Youth Opportunity Program was discussed with the personnel specialist coordinating this program. Special emphasis was placed on the problems involved in the initiation of the program. The personnel staff was asked to describe what actions were taken when the TWX of 26 May authorizing the program was received; what was done in response to the training request included in the red border letter dated 12 July 1965; and how the Presidential letter was distributed to the trainees at the end of the program. The project staff also asked the individuals to describe what differences they would institute in this program if they were administering it again next year.

2. Civilian Personnel Circular 7. Paragraph V of CPC 7 describes several additional mandatory reporting requirements for the 30 June 1965 narrative quarterly report. The personnel specialists involved in preparing these sections of the quarterly narrative report were asked to describe what was done to respond appropriately to these requirements. In addition, the project staff read a copy of this section of the personnel narrative report at each installation. Since these discussions usually elicited few problems or comments, a more general discussion of the quarterly report function, both narrative and statistical, was encouraged. Some of the problems of feedback of personnel information to employees, managers, and commanders at the installation were frequently a part of these discussions.

3. Department of Army Pamphlet 690-20, Training and Development of Executives and Managers (May 1964). Two communications concerned with the executive training Pamphlet 690-20 were discussed with the training staff: a letter dated 4 September 1964 concerned with Executive Development and paragraph e of Part 1 of the

"Narrative Report of Command Training and Development Program,"
of the "Annual Report of Training Required by Government Em-
ployees Training Act," 7 June 1965. The training specialist
was asked when he received the documents, the kinds of problems
encountered in relation to these messages, the kind of distri-
bution that was afforded the material, and how the receipt of
this material affected the training program. Since the annual
report of training requested a specific paragraph in the nar-
rative report concerning the utilization of the pamphlet in
the training program, the project staff member asked to read
the appropriate paragraph of the report submitted by the local
installation.

4. CPR CP1, Career Management Basic Policies and Requirements.
   The individual in charge of re-registration of career employees
   was asked about problems involved in the re-registration pro-
   gram. The number of messages associated with this procedure
   and the intricacies of the program restricted the project
   staff in pursuing this topic in as much detail as was done in
   the three previously listed documents. At bases reporting to
   the Army Materiel Command the requirements for registration
   in the AMC Talent Bank created problems that were almost in
   separable from the problems encountered with the career re
   registration. Therefore, some of the problems discussed in
   volved questions directed toward the Talent Bank as well as the
   career re-registration program.

Collection of Incidents. At each installation the civilian personnel
staff members were asked to supply any specific incidents of problems
with the communications sent from the Office of Civilian Personnel to
their office. Although a few of these incidents concerned documents
initiated at sub commands and major commands or with instructions added
by endorsement of the command staff, the main focus of the project staff
was on written or verbal communication from DCSPER to the installation.

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The Experimental Procedures

Two experiments were conducted during the final months of the
project. One involved the rating by OCP staff members of a portion of
a quarterly narrative report submitted by selected installations. The
other concerned the characteristics of the individuals nominated for
training in two personnel courses.

Quarterly Narrative Ratings. The quarterly narrative report is
submitted by installations to their sub-commands to describe programs
and actions taken during the quarter. Certain paragraphs of this re-
port respond to specific mandatory requirements specified by directives
of the Office of Civilian Personnel. Sub-command personnel staff mem-
bers consolidate the installation reports and submit their summary either
directly to OCP or to the major command for additional consolidation.
These summary reports provide one source of information to headquarters
concerning actions and problems in the field.

One mandatory reporting requirement for the narrative covering the
quarter ending 31 December 1965 concerned the re-registration of civilian
employees in the Engineers and Scientists Career Program. The specific
request contained in the red border letter dated 15 November 1965 is
quoted below:

> b. Career Management. Commands will report on the execution
> of CPR 950-18, Army Civilian Career Program for Engineers
> and Scientists, as follows:
>
> (1) Method (e.g., classroom, individual, etc.) and extent
> of program orientation given supervisors and employees.
> If 100 per cent of these employees and supervisors
> have not been oriented, state plans and time schedule
> for completion of the orientation program.
>
> (2) Specific and complete explanation covering any in-
> stance of incomplete registration of all engineers
> and scientists as of the end of the quarter.
>
> (3) If initial appraisal (DA Form 2302-4) has not been
> submitted for all engineers and scientists by the
> end of the quarter, an analysis of the problems en-
> countered in obtaining appraisals, and a statement
> of plans and a time schedule for completing appraisals.
>
> (4) Statement of difficulties encountered in administering
> the career program and/or any problems of interpretation
> of the regulation.

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The paragraphs submitted from ten installations in response to this requirement and six consolidated reports of sub-commands were edited to delete identifying information. In the editing of the sub-command reports, it was sometimes necessary to change a phrase so that description of a variation in handling the program by installations within the original summary was restated to attribute these variations to divisions of an installation. Then these sixteen paragraphs were given to nine staff members of OCP for their independent rating of the content of these responses. The nine OCP raters were the action officers of the Career Management Branch and the staff of the Personnel Evaluation Division.

These OCP staff members were asked to rate these paragraphs by responding to four questions concerning: (1) the responsiveness of the report to the request; (2) the usefulness of the information to OCP headquarters; (3) the usefulness of the information to sub-command headquarters; and (4) an estimate of the overall excellence of the administration of this career program at the installation. (The specific questions and alternatives are included in Results of Experimental Procedures.) Although these questions may not exhaust the possible uses of these narrative reports, the study was designed to investigate the possibilities of using these kinds of written reports in other experimental studies of communication effectiveness.

Personnel Specialist Training Nominations. The second experimental device used in the project concerned nominations for the Recruitment and Placement (R&P) and Personnel Management Assistance (PMA) personnel specialist courses from nine large installations. Several changes were made in the nominating procedures for FY 67; this experiment was designed to compare the effects of these changes in procedure.

The inventory of training needs for FY 66 in the Civilian Personnel Administration Career Field was initiated by a letter dated March 1965 from DCSPER through channels to Civilian Personnel Officers. The letter invited nominations to be sent by 24 May 1965 to the Field Offices for the R&P course and to the DCSPER Training and Development Division for

the PMA (revised) course. Priorities for accepting nominees in the courses were also listed.

The FY 67 nominations were similarly invited by a letter dated February 1966. The changes in procedures and requirements initiated by this letter include: (1) the survey was to be conducted earlier in the year; (2) the nominations were to be submitted to and reviewed by the sub command personnel staff; and (3) the training of certain key operating personnel staff members was to be mandatory, and time deadlines for this training were established.

Certain informal pressure was also exerted by the DCSPER staff to insure that each operating office would conduct a survey of training needs within the office and would make budgetary provisions and realistic estimates of training required.

Lists of the individuals in the initial nomination list of FY 66 for the R&P and PMA courses were collected from the Office of Civilian Personnel Field Offices. A comparable list of nominees for these two courses for FY 67 was obtained for the same installations from the various sub command headquarters. The installation personnel offices used for this experiment were:

Fort Dix, New Jersey
Letterkenny Army Depot, Pennsylvania
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland
Fort Belvoir, Virginia
Redstone Arsenal, Alabama
White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico
Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana
Tooele Army Depot, Utah
Presidio of San Francisco, California

After the list of individuals nominated for training for the two fiscal years was obtained, the project staff collected background information from the career files. The study involved a comparison of the characteristics of the individuals nominated for these courses for FY 66 and FY 67.

RESULTS OF THE COMMUNICATION CASE STUDIES

This chapter is a description of the basic data collected in the
case study of the four selected communications. The basic data are dis-
cussed with minimum interpretive comment. The implications of these
data for communication policy of the Army Office of Civilian Personnel
are described in subsequent chapters.

Youth Opportunity Campaign

The most popular program that was discussed in detail with the
civilian personnel staff was the Youth Opportunity Campaign (YOC). Al-
most all offices reported an extremely successful program with these
youngsters. The communications that were sent to describe and authorize
the program, however, were not the focus of such universal acclaim. One
obvious objection expressed by members of each civilian personnel staff
concerned the lack of advance notice. Although a few of the civilian
personnel officers had received a day or so advance notice of this pro-
gram before the authorization teletype arrived, most of them indicated
that it was rumor or that they had guessed that such a program was pend-
ing from newspaper articles. The personnel staff at several sub commands
gave informal advance notice to some civilian personnel officers. This
relatively "short fuse" program required almost instantaneous action
from the Civilian Personnel Office to obtain information about jobs
that could be filled by trainees and the availability of money for
these jobs.

At essentially all the installations visited, a general staff meet-
ing was held at which division heads were asked to estimate their par-
ticular requirements for trainees. The State Employment Service was
then asked if they had received from the Civil Service Commission in-
formation concerning criteria for selection of trainees. The program

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for obtaining applicants for the positions usually included use of news-
paper, radio, and television publicity. At a few installations schools
were in session in early June when the program was instituted; at others
the high school students had already completed the school year and could
not be contacted through this source. The State Employment Service was
the principal source of referrals for the program at essentially all in-
stallations contacted. None of these installations encountered major
difficulties in obtaining applicants for these jobs. A few in the remote
areas had minor problems with transportation to the base for the YOC's
and with acceptance by employees of the application of the nepotism rule
in this program.

After the initial recruiting effort, the processing of the YOC's
was done either at the employment service office or at the base personnel
office. One office questioned the processing procedures since higher
headquarters had not specified job titles for these employees; however,
this office found that a neighboring installation was using the title
"trainee," which they then adopted. Most of the civilian personnel
officers did not consider this a problem. Trainees' past experience
and training, if any, was used in the basic processing and assigning
of individuals to work groups. Girls tended to be assigned to clerical
jobs, and the older and huskier boys to outside work. College students,
included in a few of the programs, tended to be assigned to more techni-
cal office positions.

The orientation program was usually a joint effort of the personnel
office, the commanding officer, and the subgroup to which the youngster
was assigned. At some installations this orientation was done with con-
siderable ceremony and fanfare; at others it was informal and presumably
handled by the supervisor on an individual basis.

When authority was granted for increasing the number of YOC's beyond
the initial one per cent goal, most of the personnel officers were de-
lighted. They had been asked by various supervisors if more trainees
could be assigned to their sections. The screening procedures and
orientation programs for the trainees hired in the "second wave" tended

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to be more carefully planned and executed. Hiring was done throughout the summer to replace those who quit for various reasons. Very few disciplinary actions forced youngsters out of the program, although some were released because of poor attendance. Others quit to take a vacation with their parents, to go out for the school football team, etc.

The document dated 12 July 1965 concerning training of YOC's was received too late for specific planned action. Of the twenty installations visited, four indicated that they had already instituted such a program, and six said that they did not remember receiving the communication. The other ten did not use the information directly; however, in the report, "Training for Youth Opportunity Campaign," they emphasized the role of the supervisor in instructing trainees.

The President's letter was received on time for distribution at the termination ceremony at 18 of the 20 installations. Youths that terminated earlier were mailed this letter. Several Commanding Officers had already prepared a letter for distribution to the YOC's at the ceremony before it was known that one would be received with the President's signature.

Overall, this program was considered very successful by the criteria applied at the local level. Some of the key differences in applying the program to local conditions are described in the following paragraphs.

1. Number hired in the program. Table 3 shows the distribution of the percentage of the civilian work force hired as trainees for the 20 installations. The per cent of the total civilian work force ranged from 11.3 per cent to 0.7 per cent. The installations at the middle and lower levels of these percentages emphasized the following kinds of problems: the non-availability of additional funds to support trainees, the 1.2 per cent "quota" imposed by some sub commands, the availability of "appropriate" work, and the possible impact of hiring

trainees during a period of layoff and reorganization of full-
time civilian staff. The installations that hired relatively
large numbers of young people emphasized the need for additional
employees to accomplish long neglected jobs.

TABLE 3

Percentage of Civilian Work Force Hired as YOC Trainees

Percentage	Number of Installations
1.0% and below	2
1.1% - 1.5%	5
1.6% - 2.5%	6
2.6% - 3.5%	1
3.6% - 4.5%	2
4.6% and above	4

2. Emphasis in selection on minority group membership, economic
    need, and educational needs. At several installations the
    screening of candidates for inclusion in the program was handled
    entirely by the State Employment Service. The installations
    simply hired the number they needed consecutively from the em-
    ployment service referrals. At other installations various
    additional strategies were used to select and assign these
    youngsters. A few assigned their staff members to do inter-
    viewing and review of applicants at the State Employment Service
    office, others screened referrals at their offices, and still
    others used multiple recruiting sources.

    The descriptive documents concerning the selection of
    Youth Opportunity trainees mentioned as important criteria the
    economic needs of the youngster and his family, the importance
    to the country of persuading potential school dropouts to con-
    tinue their education, and the stimulation of minority group
    members and youngsters without work experience to obtain work
    experience. The attitude of the key members of the personnel

offices toward the various criteria for selection of trainees was apparent in the interviews. Some emphasized the minority group representation; this seemed to be a function of the attitudes of the Commanding Officer and/or the Civilian Personnel Officer rather than a function of the particular geographic location. Other installations seemed to emphasize the economic, social, and educational disadvantaged in their programs. These installations are generally in the smaller communities of the Midwest and West where minority group conflicts are less apparent. The emphasis of a particular installation's program reflects the interpretation and, therefore, the attitudes of the key personnel involved in the selection program as well as the perceived importance of the above criteria in the local area.

In suggesting what might be done differently in a subsequent YOC program, most of the personnel officers indicated that they would like to have additional advance notice. They then could do a better job of initial screening of applicants in terms of job skills of the youths and could better utilize supervisors who can effectively direct youngsters.

3. Job assignments given Youth Opportunity Trainees. The suggestion that trainees should be given "meaningful work" was handled differently at the installations. Where the larger number of YOC's were hired, sizable crews of boys were assigned to maintenance and cleanup jobs in the buildings and grounds. Other installations specifically avoided assignments of this kind and emphasized office work and shop apprentice-type jobs. (These installations in general did not have the same magnitude of problems in the maintenance of buildings and grounds, however.) Security clearance problems and safety considerations limited the jobs available at a few of the bases, especially at the proving grounds and research installations.

4. Problems associated with nepotism. Several installations had problems associated with the application of the general nepotism regulations of the Civil Service Commission in the Youth Opportunity Program. This was a serious problem only at a few of the

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installations visited. In the remote installations where Army
activities provide essentially all employment opportunities and
at installations where children of enlisted personnel would have
been eligible for such employment, the nepotism rule caused some
hard feelings. These were expressed by employees, service per-
sonnel, and the youngsters rejected for employment. In the
populous areas or in areas where there are other government
agencies, very few problems arose over this ruling.

The communications concerning the Youth Opportunity Campaign out-
lined broad, general objectives for the program and required specific
local direction in meeting these goals. This kind of freedom to direct
a program not only tends to foster variation at the installation level,
but also tends to intensify the personal commitment and enthusiasm of
local managers to the program. With one exception, where the nepotism
problem was a paramount issue, the personnel action officers felt that
their YOC program was one of the finest personnel efforts ever conducted
at their installation.

Civilian Personnel Circular 7

Civilian Personnel Circular 7, Paragraph V, 29 April 1965, included
a number of mandatory reporting requirements for the quarterly narrative
report covering the quarter ending 30 June 1965. These requirements were
to report the current status of career re-registration: the estimated
career trainee intake for FY 66; the training needs met in the Medical
Self-Help Training program; an example of a position management analysis
study done during the quarter; actions taken during the quarter concerning
equal employment opportunity; uses made of oral presentation of incentive
award nominations; and the delegation to supervisors of suggestion award
approval. At every installation this CPC was received in time, and the
requirements were generally ones that were anticipated by the Civilian
Personnel Officer so that very few problems were encountered.

The coordination of the narrative reporting requirements is usually
assigned to the Personnel Management Assistance Branch. The chief of
this branch expects other branch chiefs to submit drafts of various

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sections of the narrative. These sections are revised and edited for the Civilian Personnel Officer. (At three installations, all relatively small, the CPO appointed himself as the narrative coordinator.)

The narratives submitted for the quarter ending 30 June 1965 were considered by the local staffs as relatively routine. Three specific problems were uncovered, however. At one installation there was some difficulty in locating the reference material referred to in CPC 7 concerning "Training Needs Met." This paragraph refers the staff to DA Pamphlet 350-8 and to Section IV, CPC 28, 1964. There is no notation in CPC 7, 1965, that these documents concern Medical Self-Help Training. To respond to this paragraph some searching in the library was required. If the name of the program had been included, the personnel staff would have known the office to contact for the necessary information. (In reading and discussing the narrative with one PMA, no references to Medical Self-Help Training were found. He had obviously not looked for these references.)

The requirement that each installation report its best example of position management analysis caused a minor problem at two installations. Both of these offices felt that they had no particular instances to report and stated this in the initial narrative. One sub command telephoned the CPO on receiving his narrative and insisted that he include one example. The CPO complied even though he felt that the incident at his installation was not applicable. The other installation received no objection from its headquarters concerning the omission of a specific example.

At another installation the Commanding Officer insists on reviewing all narrative statements for higher headquarters submitted by his subordinates. The narrative for 30 June 1965 was returned to the CPO at this installation for "extensive revision," since he had made a few statements concerning restrictions imposed by higher headquarters on the local program. The CPO was somewhat unhappy with having to rewrite this report, and he indicated that higher headquarters could not obtain his opinions unless the Commanding Officer concurred.

Many of the personnel officers questioned the effectiveness and usefulness of quarterly narrative reports. Reporting requirements are levied not only by DA level, but also by the major and sub command. The report eventually obtained by the Department of Army is a summary prepared by successive levels of command. Several staff members asked why the primary requirements are levied by DA level, since DA does not obtain an answer from the action officers at the various installations. Some of these action officers suggested that the purpose of special reporting requirements was to inform the installations that DA wanted to emphasize the particular program rather than to receive information from the field.

Some ancillary functions served by the quarterly narrative requirements were mentioned by several personnel officers. The report provides a specific time for the personnel staff to review their program and plan for subsequent efforts. This also provides an opportunity for the CPO to review with his Commanding Officer the accomplishments of the civilian personnel program and anticipated future requirements. Several Civilian Personnel Officers indicated that the Medical Self-Help reference in CPC 7 was helpful in convincing the medical administrators at base hospitals that civilians should be included in their Medical Self-Help Training program. Therefore, the narrative portions of the report are at times useful to the local office even when there is a question as to the usefulness of the information to higher headquarters.

During discussion of the quarterly narrative report, the statistical report, 1346, was also discussed. Difficulty in obtaining data from small concentrations of employees who work at remote sites caused most difficulty with the suspense date of the 1346. Although the project staff did not attempt to systematically collect data covering the 1346 form, at most installations the DA feedback and feedback of personnel program information to the Commanding Officer was discussed. Three installations use the DA feedback reports in presentations to their Commanding Officers. Most of the others state that the summary information is received too late for inclusion in their local report. Trends of the local personnel program are analyzed using data collected at the installation for previous quarters. Several sample reports were obtained by

the project staff, however, that indicate that the local analysis is
patterned after the information categories of the 1346 form.

Some operating personnel offices feel that narrative requirements
should be reduced from every quarter to either once a year or every other
quarter. Although these narratives do not require a lot of staff time,
they are required at a period when many other reports are also required.
Some CPO's imply that these narratives contain a minimum of pertinent
information for higher headquarters. In general, however, these person
nel men do not object to the filing of the statistical report on a
quarterly basis.

Department of Army Pamphlet 690-20, Training and Development of Executives
and Managers (May 1964)

The personnel training staffs at the various installations were
asked about the problems associated with the training pamphlet 690-20.
In the original distribution of this pamphlet, no specific cover letter
was included. Several training men reported receiving the document,
glancing at it, and placing it in their bookcase as a reference item.
They did not expect the kind of follow on reporting requirements that
subsequently were associated with this document. The letter dated
4 September 1964 on Executive Development specifying that commanders
should formulate action plans for developing executives was the first
communication received referring to 690-20. Four of the 20 installations
could not recall receiving this letter and could not find it in their
files. Quite a few of the other training men remembered seeing the let
ter but could not produce it. Since this was not a "red border" letter,
it apparently was not perceived as being important.

Several training men said that an insufficient number of copies of
the pamphlet were sent. At four installations the training staff re
quested more copies of the booklet and received them several months
after they were expected. One training man was certain that he had re
ceived a copy; however, there was no record in the mail room, and he
could not find a copy in his office. At another installation the Civilian
Personnel Officer reported that he did not receive a copy through regular

channels. He heard while at the Pentagon that this document was receiving emphasis and obtained one from another installation.

The Annual Report of Training dated 7 June 1965 included a paragraph requesting specific information on the application of 690-20 to the local executive development program. During the discussion of 690-20 the project staff asked to see this report. Four of these installations did not respond in their report concerning 690-20. They justified this by referring to the first paragraph of Part I of the Annual Report of Training which states, "Programs of a routine nature need not be reported."

The impact of 690-20 on the training programs at the installations has not been extensive. Training activity is generally focused on lower level personnel. The training men at the smaller installations stated that this kind of program aimed at high level personnel could be applied to very few of their civilian employees. At the larger installations where executive training programs have been utilized, the training men felt that their past program effort has reflected the training philosophy described in 690-20. This document was not perceived as a change in Army attitudes or procedures in the executive training area, but as a useful reference guide for their current program. They did not change their ongoing activities in executive and manager training as a direct result of receiving this series of communications.

These training men made a number of favorable comments about the informal news and notes sent to them by the training people at DA level. The descriptions of other installation programs and the ideas for generating interest in training were useful to them.

CPR CPI, Career Management Basic Policies and Requirements

The communications problems associated with CPR CPI were discussed with various personnel office staff members at each installation. This formidable document provides detailed instructions and procedures for completing the 2302 form used in the re-registration of civilian employees in the Army Career Program. Discussions of this program with the staff members of the personnel office produced the most heated comments obtained

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on these visits. A considerable amount of time and energy of the personnel staff was required, and complaints from the careerists completing their forms were frequent. At installations under the Army Materiel Command, the same 2302 form was used for registering employees in the AMC Talent Bank. This Talent Bank file of data includes more civilian personnel than does the career registration program and produced a larger work load for the personnel staff at the AMC installations. It was difficult to ascertain the added work load resulting from the additional requirements inserted by the sub commands, since the personnel staff at AMC installations combined the career re-registration and Talent Bank programs into a single effort.

At the various sites several different procedures were used to instruct registrants. At most installations key supervisors from each career field were assembled in small groups for detailed instructions in completing the 2302 form. They were supplied with a copy of CPR CPI. Then they discussed, item by item, the correct procedures for filling in the information. These supervisors in turn conducted similar sessions with the careerists in their sections. At a few small installations the personnel staff handled all of the sessions in which careerists completed the form.

A few of the installations gave each individual his "purged" 201 file as an information reference. After the registrant had completed the form, it was checked for correct format by a personnel staff officer. Then the form was sent to the registrant's department for typing. The personnel department then reviewed the form again before it was sent for key punching. Sizable variation in the methods used by the personnel departments in checking the form was described. Some personnel offices checked only the format of the responses and then signed the form. At other offices 201 files were searched to verify the accuracy of the information included on each 2302 form. Forms were reviewed at various command levels where a number of errors were detected. Incorrect forms were returned to the installation and resubmission of the corrected form was then required.

This brief outline of the steps required for this program omits many of the detailed frustrations of the personnel staff and the individual

careerist. Changes were made in deadlines, especially in the Talent Bank registration, and in the exact specification of who was and who was not required to be registered. Confusions were also related to many other problems; for example, the various GS levels to be included, the number of copies of the completed form required, the ultimate destination of the completed forms, the implications of various attitudes toward mobility, the action to be taken concerning individuals who refused to complete the form. Several personnel staff people felt that this was one of the most unpopular requirements that their office has had to enforce.

In spite of these difficulties the individuals who are very familiar with CPR CP1 feel that it is a well-organized and well-written document. Since the 2302 form is a detailed document, the instruction booklet must be detailed and explicit. The personnel staff reported that the manual, especially after Change 1, answered most of the questions raised about the form. This document is bulky and tends to frighten the less verbal employees. The CPR CP1 was not very useful in the Talent Bank registration, where many shop operatives were required to register, since these employees essentially refused to wade through the material.

Employees were not enthusiastic about completing this detailed form. Since the career program includes most of the higher level civilians at an installation, the re-registration procedure involved the key civilians with whom the successful Civilian Personnel Office must maintain effective relationships. Many personnel staff members feel that information about the way this registration would benefit the individual and the Army should have been provided. This comment, although almost universally made at the AMC installations, was also directed toward the career registration program at other installations. These personnel men are reacting to their understanding of the Personnel Career Program as well as to the pressure exerted by key civilians in other career programs. When an assignment, promotion, or selection of a careerist to a key position is not universally applauded, the career program is often blamed by unsuccessful candidates. Favorable attitudes toward the program are very closely tied to the perceived effect of the decisions made for each individual. It is also difficult to defend the importance of the program when incorrect printouts

of the submitted career information are received from headquarters or
when notification is received erroneously that a person is not listed
in the career file. These episodes reflecting the growing pains of the
automated system do not build confidence in the system.

Although all of the problems encountered at each office cannot be
discussed in detail, several recurring deficiencies should be mentioned.
Many more copies of CPR CP1 were required for the training sessions.
Additional copies of this rather long document were prepared at several
of these installations by their own print shops. Key punching facilities
and instructions for the key punch operator were not adequate. Delays in
submitting card decks occurred. Telephone calls to various command
levels to clarify instructions reflected confusion about the program
at command levels.

In general, the written communication contained in CPR CP1 was under-
stood by the personnel staff. However, the major communication problems
concerned what was not communicated. The key question not answered in
this communication for any of the registrants was "how are they really
going to use this information?"

RESULTS OF EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

The two experiments conducted in the project involved two different kinds of response from the operating personnel offices. The first concerned a portion of a narrative report routinely submitted by installations. This narrative paragraph was a description of actions taken by the local installation in response to a directive from headquarters. The study involved evaluations of the message content by headquarters staff personnel directly involved in the preparation of the program directives.

The other experiment concerned differences in installation responses due to a change in procedure for handling a recurring requirement. In this case the characteristics of individuals nominated for training courses under one set of procedures were compared to the same characteristics of those nominated under revised procedures.

Rating of Narrative Paragraphs

One of the mandatory reporting requirements for the quarterly narrative report for 31 December 1965 involved reporting on the Engineer and Scientist Career Program re-registration. The paragraphs from operating offices are consolidated by successive levels of the command hierarchy and submitted to the Office of Civilian Personnel, Department of Army. The paragraphs written by ten installations in response to this requirement and the appropriate paragraphs from consolidated reports of six sub commands were selected for use in the experiment. Each of the selected installations and sub commands has a group of career registrants in the engineer and scientist field.

After the project staff edited the paragraphs to delete information that would identify an installation or sub command, these paragraphs were submitted to staff members of the Office of Civilian Personnel for evaluation.

The staff members selected to do this rating were members of the Career Management Branch and the Personnel Evaluation Division. These headquarters action officers are the key staff involved in directing the career programs and in obtaining information from narrative reports.

Table 4 lists the questions the raters used in evaluating the content of these narrative paragraphs. For purposes of the analysis of these ratings, the "a" alternatives of the questions were assigned a score of 1, the "b" alternatives, 2, etc. Inter-rater reliability of these questions was estimated by summing the responses of ratings by four raters for each paragraph and then summing the scores for the remaining five ratings. These two sums were correlated across the 16 paragraphs and resulted in coefficients for each of the four questions. These correlations were around $r = .6$ to .65. This was considered adequate reliability to permit the summing of the ratings for all nine raters. Therefore, for each narrative paragraph and each question, a sum of the ratings was used to represent all nine ratings of that paragraph. These sums were then intercorrelated. The product-moment relationships are shown in Table 4.

The intercorrelations of the questions show some interesting and statistically significant relationships. The correlation of 0.75 between the responsiveness of the paragraphs to the request (Question 1) and the judged excellence of administration of the program (Question 4) is statistically significant beyond the 1% level of confidence. These raters indicated that the operating offices that appropriately respond to the reporting requirements are also administering an effective career program. Conversely, those offices that do not respond effectively to the reporting requirement are rated as not administering their career program as efficiently. The relationship of 0.76 between the questions which refer to usefulness of the paragraph to headquarters and sub command staffs (Questions 2 & 3) is similarly statistically significant. The paragraphs that the raters feel contain useful information for headquarters policy decisions also contain information for sub command supervisory action.

Although the correlation coefficient of -.41 between Questions 3 and 4 is not quite statistically significant, it suggests that the career

TABLE 4

Rating Sheet for Narrative Paragraphs

1. Do you consider this an appropriate answer to the reporting requirement; i.e., is it responsive to the request?

    a. Yes, it contains the details of the requested information.
    b. Questionable; it leaves a few requested items in some doubt.
    c. No, it does not answer the questions asked.

2. Does this report contain information that could assist headquarters personnel in making new policies or changes in the career program?

    a. Yes, it contains useful information for policy decisions.
    b. Questionable; it contains some suggestions, but these are not the kinds of data that are of much use in deriving policies.
    c. No, it contains no information of a policy directing kind.

3. Does this report contain information that is useful to the sub command in handling their supervisory function?

    a. Yes, the sub command should take some action on the basis of this report.
    b. Questionable; the sub command may want to take action on the basis of this report.
    c. No, this report does not provide the sub command with any basis for action.

4. From this description alone how would you rate the Civilian Personnel administration of the career program for engineers and scientists at this installation?

    a. Excellent
    b. Good
    c. Fair to Poor
    d. Can't tell from this description

Intercorrelations of Ratings of Narrative Paragraphs

Question	1	2	3	4
1				
2	.16			
3	-.29	.76		
4	.75	.05	-.41	

programs judged to be well administered require minimum sub command supervision and those which are judged to be more poorly administered require sub command action. The remaining coefficients in the table do not approach a level that is statistically different from zero; however, this lack of correlation is of some interest in estimating potential uses of narrative descriptions in evaluating personnel programs.

The relationship between responsiveness of the narrative (Question 1) and the usefulness of the report to headquarters (Question 2) or to the sub command (Question 3) are low. The kinds of information that are required in order to have the paragraph judged "responsive to the request" are not necessarily the kinds of information judged to be useful to either headquarters or sub command. If these reporting requirements are developed to provide policy directing information, they apparently do not serve this function. However, these reporting requirements may serve other useful functions for the installation, the sub command, and the headquarters.

In the previous discussion of this experiment there has been no mention of differences in the ratings associated with whether the edited paragraphs were installation reports or command consolidated reports. Normally, the headquarters staff receives only command summaries. This variable was introduced into the experiment to assess the effect of the consolidation on the characteristics of the information conveyed by the paragraphs. No statistically significant differences between the installation and command reports were demonstrated in these ratings; however, some minor differences were observed. The command summaries were judged to be slightly more responsive to the request (Question 1), slightly less useful to headquarters and command staffs (Questions 2 & 3), and indicative of a somewhat better administrative handling of the program (Question 4). This could be interpreted to mean that although the information contained in command summaries and installation reports is not particularly different, the command summaries tend to be better written. Since these differences were quite small, the entire set of ratings were used for the analysis.

Nominations for Personnel Specialist Training

In this experiment the characteristics of the individuals nominated
for training courses in FY 66 and FY 67 were compared. Lists of the FY 66
original nominees for the Recruitment and Placement course and the Revised
Personnel Management Assistance course were obtained from DCSPER Field Of-
fices for nine installations that have relatively large personnel staffs.
A comparable list of nominees for these courses from the same installa-
tions was obtained from the sub command offices for FY 67 training. The
different sources used for obtaining these lists were necessitated by a
change in nominating review procedures for FY 67. The characteristics
of the individual nominees were ascertained by searching the career files.
Only four of the FY 66 and six of the FY 67 nominees on these lists did
not have career cards in the files.

In Table 5 the distributions of several characteristics of the nom-
inees for these courses are presented. The distribution of the Performance
Ratings in the table requires some clarification. The supervisory rating
numbers recorded in the career file for eight areas (all areas except
supervision and administration) were summed to obtain a total score. If
this score was 8 for an individual, it indicates that he was given an
outstanding rating (1) in each area. An above average rating is recorded
as a 2, and an average rating is given a 3 score in this system. The
consolidated tabulation of performance ratings presented in Table 5 used
the following summed scores to define the categories:

Consistently Outstanding	8 - 11
Above Average	12 - 18
Average	19 - 24

This procedure provides a rough categorization of the performance ratings
given these individuals.

Statistical analyses of these distributions (using X^2) showed no
significant differences between those nominated for FY 66 and FY 67 in
either of these courses. Since the number of nominees in a given cate-
gory was small, observed differences had to be substantial before statis-
tical significance could be achieved. Therefore, some of the general
trends of the data displayed in Table 5 should be of interest to OCP

TABLE 5

Comparison of FY 66 and FY 67 Nominations
for the R&P and PMA Courses at Selected Installations

Grade	R&P FY 66	R&P FY 67	PMA FY 66	PMA FY 67
GS 5	1	2	0	0
GS 7	5	8	0	0
GS 9	16	8	0	2
GS 10	1	1	0	0
GS 11	15	10	5	10
GS 12	4	5	8	12
GS 13	1	1	2	2
Education				
High School Graduate	15	10	2	2
Some Formal Education beyond high school	14	16	10	10
College Graduate	13	9	2	13
Graduate Degree	1	0	1	1
Performance Rating				
Consistently outstanding	11	9	5	7
Above Average	19	11	8	14
Average	7	1	2	2
Not Rated	6	14	0	3
Age				
30 and under	4	5	0	1
31 - 40	10	6	0	3
41 - 50	19	16	10	15
51 - 60	10	9	4	6
Over 60	0	0	1	1
Sex				
Male	27	13	9	23
Female	16	22	6	3
Total	43	35	15	26

Headquarters personnel even though the differences do not approach
statistical significance. For the revised PMA course, there was a sub-
stantial increase in the gross number nominated for FY 67. At these
nine installations nominations were received for 15 spaces in the PMA
course for FY 66; the next year 26 nominations were submitted. This increase
may be related to the requirement that was added in the document call-
ing for nominations for FY 67: "Activity level chiefs of the PMA function,
and senior PMA's in charge of operating PMA programs for assigned organi-
zational segments must complete the course before 30 June 1967. Journey-
men and other PMA's who meet the minimum entrance requirements for the
course are to complete it before 31 December 1967, or within six months
of assuming PMA duties, when Department of Army training schedules and
available spaces permit." However, the similar deadline for training
chiefs of employment services and personnel staffing for the R&P course
did not produce an increase in nominees. At these installations 43
were nominated for FY 66 and 35 for FY 67 for the R&P course.

The distribution of GS levels among the nominees is relatively con-
sistent from year to year. As would be expected, the personnel meeting
the qualifications for entrance into the PMA course tend to be in higher
grades than those nominated for the R&P course. Similar expected trends
indicate that the PMA nominees include fewer individuals without educa-
tion beyond high school graduation and fewer under the age of 40. The
nominees for FY 67 in the PMA course include more college graduates than
the FY 66 list. Distributions of other characteristics of the nominees
for each course, such as current job title, previous mobility, and com-
mendations and awards, did not show differences between the lists for
these two years.

When the lists of FY 67 nominees were requested from six of the
sub commands, they were also asked to indicate if they recommended any
deletions or additions to lists submitted by these selected installations.
This additional information is of some interest to ascertain one possible
effect of the change in review procedures. One sub command deleted a
nominee and suggested a replacement for this staff specialist. One other
command office indicated that they also made some deletions in the lists
submitted by their installations; however, these deletions were not done

for the particular installation that was used in this study.

This experimental approach to evaluating changes in a procedure obviously does not measure all of the pertinent variables that may be affected by this change. One of the key reasons for using the command personnel staff to review nominations was to involve this group with the budgetary problems that have occurred in the past. Although the initial nominations for these courses may be appropriate, there is no guarantee that those nominated will actually attend the course. The field office and headquarters staff who arrange these training courses report that one recurring problem has been that the qualifications of those who actually attend the courses tend to be less than the qualifications of those on the initial nomination list. It would be interesting to examine also the list of personnel men who have actually completed the courses under the FY 66 nominating procedure and compare that list with those who will complete the courses in FY 67. However, the change in these procedures does not seem to have produced striking differences in the appropriateness of the individuals nominated.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The question of communication effectiveness can be asked at a
variety of levels. At one step in the sequence one might ask if the
output is understandable to the reader in terms of what he is expected
to do. At this level the four communications studied in the initial
phase of the contract appear to be quite good. Although a few minor
questions could be asked about the specific steps to be taken in the
Youth Opportunity Campaign and questions were asked about CPR CP1, none
of the installations experienced difficulty in applying the documents
to their program. During installation visits personnel staff were asked
to supply specific instances of poor communications from higher head-
quarters to their office. Very few examples were cited where the writ-
ten communication was not understood. Instances of seemingly conflicting
directives from various levels of command were noted; however, these were
apparently resolved easily. Therefore, very few instances were discovered
where the content of a message sent from OCP to an operating civilian per-
sonnel office was not considered clear. The areas of question usually were
concerned with a desired specific interpretation for local convenience or
an unusual condition at a particular installation. These data provide a
similar finding to the statement made by the Franklin Institute staff in
their report on Army communications: "Army communications are, in general,
clear and understandable, and current emphasis on achieving communications
clarity, by directives on writing style and by excessive review, is mis-
placed."[1] Therefore, the remaining discussion of the information derived
from the field study phase of the project focuses on variation in the
implementation of the communications.

At another level the question of effectiveness of communication could
be asked in terms of the consistency of the response to the communications.
The case study information revealed several differences among installations

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[1] J. N. Bloom, C. E. Mayfield, and R. M. Williams, Modern Army Communi-
cations, (Philadelphia, 1962), p. 84.

in response to the same message. If consistency of response is desired, the key problem is to identify these differences, classify them, and attempt to determine the sources of communication barriers so that remedial techniques can be instituted and evaluated. A classification system of some communication barriers to account for the observed variations in the response of installation programs to various messages was developed. Although this classification system cannot be considered all-inclusive or final, it does suggest a few techniques that could be applied and evaluated within the Army civilian personnel programs. The classifications under which these problems are discussed concern command offices and commanders, communication channels, the Civilian Personnel Officer and his staff, special local conditions, the program evaluation system, and the knowledge the local personnel staff has concerning influences on the policy generating offices.

Influence of Command Offices and Commanders

The Civilian Personnel Officer at an Army installation is required to have allegiance to a variety of levels of command. He is usually on the Commanding Officer's staff, although at Supply and Maintenance Command installations he reports through a Director of Administration. Many CPO's said that their primary responsibility and allegiance was to the Commanding Officer. Their personnel program was primarily a reflection of the desires of the CO. It is obvious that the involvement of the Commanding Officer in personnel policies can make quite dramatic differences in the outcomes of personnel programs. The CPO also has a relationship to a personnel staff man at the next higher headquarters. The amount of direction and advice obtained from the command personnel officer seems to be quite variable among installations. In some commands the personnel staff officer attempts to shape the emphasis of the program at each of his installations. Other commands perceive their role as primarily advisory, assisting and coordinating the operating offices. The CPO also has a relationship to the Office of Civilian Personnel, Department of Army. A relatively large proportion of the basic policy of his personnel program is generated from or through this office. His relationship to OCP affects his overall career, since decisions about

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transfer, upgrading within the personnel career field, etc. are partially
controlled from this office. The inspection of personnel offices by
representatives of all levels of command, even by the Civil Service Com-
mission, also has demonstrable effects on the local program. Therefore,
some of the differences observed in the programs at various installations
can be a function of the differential forces brought to bear by other
levels of command.

At several of the installations where the mission and the Commanding
Officer focused on scientific and technical areas, the development and
training of executives appears to emphasize mission-oriented technical
training rather than general supervisory training. When the goals of
the organization and the Commanding Officer are not coordinated with
the goals implied by a recommended program, the CPO cannot organize and
institute an effective action plan for the program.

Other examples of the influence of higher command levels on the em-
phasis given to installation programs were observed. At several instal-
lations the CO took especially keen personal interest in the YOC program.
This affected the emphasis on counseling and training of these youths by
the supervisors and the personnel staff. Special awards for outstanding
work were conferred on some of the trainees as a direct result of this
high level interest. At several installations the implementation of the
Equal Employment Opportunity program reflected the emphasis given by com-
manders and command personnel staff members.

Operating personnel offices located at the same geographic location
as their command headquarters tend to reflect the influence of the com-
mand staff on their activities. Since these operating offices provide
personnel services for the headquarters, pressure from the Commanding
General can be transmitted through the staff personnel man directly to
the operating CPO. This may affect the communications and the programs
at the installation. Problems and errors are more visible to the higher
command at these installations. The personal strength of the CPO and
his staff and the kind of direction afforded by the command personnel
staff become much more important variables than at offices more remote
from their headquarters. Although no examples of gross interference
with the operating staff by the command staff were described, descriptions

of the informal pressures that can be applied by staff personnel offices were obtained. This influences the freedom of the operating office to institute novel programs without first involving the command office.

Attitudes of the major command and sub command personnel officers toward supplementing communications and toward instituting new programs produce some rather gross differences in work load at the operating personnel level. The most obvious example studied in the case study phase of the project was the Talent Bank requirement levied by AMC. At the small AMC installations the assignment of a personnel specialist to this program seriously reduced the availability of staff for the other ongoing programs. The person assigned this task was usually in the training department and this caused a reduction in emphasis on the training program. Overtime work by the staff was a frequent occurrence during these periods of re-registration. At most of the larger installations this added work load could be absorbed by the office without the more visible programs being curtailed.

Influence of the Communication Channels

The complexity of the command channels is another rather potent variable affecting the time available to respond to a directive from OCP and the emphasis given the program at a local installation. At Class I installations it was observed that problems with suspense dates, multiple channel reports, etc. were not as frequent as at the other installations. The personnel reporting channels from the Class I to the numbered Army and then directly to DCSPER require at least one less step in the command chain than in the offices where there is a personnel staff at both the sub command and major command level. No systematic study was made of these differences in this project. However, the effect on suspense dates of many reports is clear. When summaries of installation reports are forwarded to successively higher headquarters, these staff offices insert a one-week suspense date interval for their consolidation process. A communication leaving OCP that requires command summaries of installation reports must be dispatched a considerable time before the feedback report can be expected. The processing of this initial communication on its way to an installation through the major and sub commands

takes some additional time. The suspense dates inserted at the major command are usually one week before the OCP suspense date. Similarly, the sub command inserts a suspense date one week prior to the time the major command requires the report. Therefore, the installation must submit its report to sub command headquarters at least two weeks before the consolidated report is due at OCP. Installations reporting through the numbered Armies usually receive the reporting requirement earlier and have at least an extra week to prepare their report. Several CPO's suggested that similar reductions in the number of consolidations performed in a command staff could be accomplished in the AMC chain by sending the original installation reports to sub command and major command. The major command would summarize these reports for direct transmission to OCP. An alternative would be for sub commands to submit their summaries directly to OCP as well as to major command. This would require the consolidation of more summary reports at OCP.

Problems with suspense dates were reported by installations as the principal incidents of communication failure. At five separate installations a personnel staff member showed the project staff a communication that arrived on or after their suspense date for the report. Since time-date stamps of arrival of a message are not routinely affixed at the various offices, it is difficult to find the specific point of communication blockage. Operating personnel suggest that most delays occur at command staff offices; however, such a statement should be based on direct objective evidence.

Influence of the CPO and His Staff

An obvious influence in the observed differences in program execution relate directly to the Civilian Personnel Officer and his staff. Many of the previously discussed command influences can be described in terms of the interaction of the CPO and his commanders.

However, independent of these influences from higher command, a unique local program is primarily a reflection of the ingenuity of the CPO and his staff. Within the framework of the Army personnel administration policies, there is considerable latitude for local innovation and autonomy.

At the same time there are many forces that tend to mold the Army programs into a consistent program. Many of the directives from DCSPER recommend or suggest detailed methods for implementing a desired program. For example, it was suggested that YOC trainees be recruited through the State Employment Service although other potential sources were also listed. Most of the 20 installations visited used the local USES office as their sole recruiting source for the YOC program. One of the reasons that local offices use these suggestions from headquarters is related to the personnel program evaluation system. A unique approach to an Army program by a local staff tends to be applauded by inspection teams only if it is successful. Experimental failures can be criticized with the question, "Why didn't you use the recommended procedure?" Therefore, a CPO who is trying to manage an office that is not vulnerable to criticism from inspection teams may tend to pattern his program to conform with the suggestions offered in the DCSPER communications rather than tailoring the program to his view of local idiosyncrasies. However, other CPO's jealously guard their local autonomy. Therefore, differences among installation personnel programs partially reflect the risk-taking attitudes of the CPO and his staff and the confidence they feel in introducing new procedures. The amoung of autonomy given to the CPO by the Commanding Officer can also either discourage or reward innovation.

The extent of overall Army personnel experience of the CPO and his staff and their experience at that installation seem to be other potent influences on the local program. Some installations have had essentially no turnover among their key personnel specialists for several years. Although this may have some undesirable effects, the experienced staff is usually able to handle special program requirements and continue to administer its other responsibilities. At an installation where essentially all key staff members have a minimum of experience at that installation, new crash programs are likely to seriously interfere with the ongoing program.

Influence of Local Conditions

Personnel program effectiveness is influenced by other local conditions not associated with the personnel staff or the commanders. The emphasis on

various criteria for selection of YOC trainees, for example, was influenced by local employment conditions, remoteness of the installation, minority group density in the area, etc. At one installation there was considerable resistance from careerists to the re-registration requirement. This was intense because the installation was undergoing a reduction in force and reorganization program. At installations where the employment history was more stable, careerists were not enthusiastic but did comply with this requirement.

The sample of operating personnel offices that was visited represented various levels of complexity of mission serviced by the office. Some of the personnel offices report to only one command headquarters concerning the entire complement of civilians. At the other extreme some twenty different higher headquarters were represented in the work force serviced by another personnel office. Although cross-servicing agreements reduce the number of different reporting channels, a personnel office that services units reporting to a variety of headquarters has more complex reporting requirements. At a few installations the operating personnel office was responsible for remote locations which further extends their personnel work load and the complexities of the program.

The geographic location of a base makes some obvious differences not only in the kind of personnel specialists that can be obtained, but also in the general civilian recruiting effort. The lack of educational, cultural, recreational, and medical facilities at the remote installations requires additional emphasis on these functions by the installation management. The personnel offices at these facilities get involved in sponsoring many of these activities. Therefore, these offices are required to handle programs that are not a part of the job under different local conditions.

Influence of the Evaluation System

One of the functions of the Field Offices of OCP is the inspection and evaluation of operating personnel offices. These OCP staff members are frequently involved in evaluation visits sponsored by the Civil Service Commission and the major and sub commands as well as the Department

of Army inspections. Reports are written following these visits and the
various oral and written reports are submitted to the Commanding Officer
of the base and his superiors at command headquarters. The portions of
these reports concerning the civilian personnel program can have positive
or negative effects upon the relationship of the CPO and his Commanding
Officer. These reports also affect the impressions of the competence of
the CPO held by staff members of OCP. Inspection team visits are usually
not considered by the local staff as opportunities for demonstrating their
effectiveness, but rather are seen as necessary ordeals during which they
hope none of their mistakes are uncovered. Most CPO's attempt to antici-
pate areas of detailed interest to the inspection team and prepare their
records and staff appropriately.

One characteristic of most evaluation systems is that errors and
problems are uncovered and noted while good performances are more likely
to be expected and not given similar emphasis. CPO's, in discussing their
general program and the inspection system, recalled in detail the number
of "violations" found. This orientation on avoiding making errors and
doing a job by the suggested technique tends to reduce innovation. Tailor-
ing the personnel program to unique local conditions is not reinforced
by this evaluation system as efficiently as nonconformity to regulations
is punished.

Therefore, one of the forces within the Army civilian personnel pro-
gram toward uniform field application of the policies and regulations is
the evaluation system. It is suggested that some communication problems
are associated with this force toward uniformity; operating offices find
it difficult to demonstrate or transmit ideas and innovations to policy
directing levels.

Influence of Knowledge of Policy Generating Offices

One of the variations noted by the project staff during the case
study phase of the project concerned the amount of contact with and in-
formation about headquarters within the operating personnel staff. In-
stallation personnel officers with recent experience at OCP tend to be
able to find answers to questions concerning new programs. This is done

partially by informal telephone calls to friends at OCP. (The frequency of these calls could not be determined from interviews at the installation. The impression derived from talking to OCP staff members was that this is done more frequently than is admitted by field personnel.) However, knowing the person to call at OCP is not the only advantage that the field man with recent OCP experience has. He can interpret communications more efficiently, since he has been included in discussions of the problems and the alternatives considered. This depth of background information on pending programs is an important variable. Visits of DCSPER personnel to the field and field personnel to the Pentagon provide most installations with useful information of this kind. At remote installations where these visits are much less frequent, the CPO and his staff often feel out of touch with the Pentagon milieu.

The ability of a CPO to affix appropriate priorities to programs and reports is an important skill. At policy generating levels within the headquarters, it is also appropriate that each action officer feels that his program is a high priority item. Therefore, essentially all directives concerning new programs are sent to the operating office with high priorities attached. The local CPO must administer this program to satisfy OCP, command, and local commander requirements. His detailed knowledge of these requirements is a critical variable.

This partial listing of variation in the personnel programs at these sample installations suggests some of the difficulties in doing field experimentation on communication effectiveness. It suggests that the ultimate goal of the Army Civilian Personnel Office cannot be a uniform application of all programs at each installation. Local variation is required to meet local needs. The optimum program at one base may be different from that at another. However, some consistencies are required and some measurement and justification in terms of local conditions of the variations that appear in a program should be possible.

One of the key implications of the observed differences among installation personnel programs is that the factors influencing the form and the outcome of a program are frequently beyond the control and the knowledge of the individuals who designed the program. Action officers at

headquarters who write communications that describe and direct a personnel program have a limited view of the exigencies of the multiple local situations in which this program will be installed. Usually, the local operating offices do not have the kinds of information that shaped the directives written by the headquarters action officer. This can mean that the goals of OCP in a given message are not fulfilled at the operating level either because of lack of information at OCP about the local conditions or because the installation staff does not know about the forces on headquarters that provided the basis for the directive. This can be true even though the message itself is written in a clear and understandable form. Informal communication within and between the various levels of the civilian personnel hierarchy is the principal force which reduces this source of inappropriate application of programs.

Variations in the priorities given to a program can be affected by information omitted from the message; they can even occur when reasons for changes in procedure are supplied. The changes in procedures for nominating personnel to training courses is one example. The formal communication described the change in procedures; however, the interpretation of why this change was instituted may be a source of speculation by the command and operating office staff. Some sub command offices may consider that the new procedure implies that they should be doing more direct supervision of the personnel programs at their installations. Others may interpret it as a mechanism for involving the sub command in the training budgetary problems of the installations. Still other command staff personnel men may institute follow-up procedures to determine which operating staff people actually attend these training courses. Although all of these interpretations may be appropriate, the different emphases placed on the alternative explanations can lead to variations in the outcome of these changed procedures.

The experimental ratings of narrative paragraphs provide another example of ways in which program emphasis is transmitted to the field. During the case study phase of the project, several CPO's volunteered the opinion that the selection of programs for inclusion in the mandatory reporting requirements of the quarterly narrative was a technique used by OCP to indicate the interest of headquarters in the program.

These CPO's stated that OCP could not really use the information pro-
vided in the narrative report. However, the local office could antici-
pate that this program would be a point of interest to inspection teams
or might require other reports. This expression of interest by OCP was
sometimes useful to the local CPO in convincing his commander that more
emphasis should be placed on a particular program. For example, the
requirement to report on the Medical Self-Help Program was an important
influence at several installations in obtaining more prompt cooperation
from the base hospital administrators in scheduling this course for
civilian employees.

Although this function of communicating high level interest is im-
portant, it is not considered the only function of the narrative report-
ing requirements.

CONCLUSIONS

At the inception of this project it was anticipated that the first year of work would focus primarily on the definition of the dimensions of the communication problems of the Army Office of Civilian Personnel. The techniques employed to define these problems could not be expected to lead to verified recommendations for the solution of the identified problems. However, the project staff was able to suggest potentially useful techniques to improve communication effectiveness and ways in which the changes can be evaluated.

From the study of the application of the communications describing four specific programs, it has been concluded that these messages sent from OCP to the installations adequately convey the intended information. The data collected at the selected operating offices indicate that, in general, the communications from OCP are clear. When questions of interpretation do arise, the mechanics of obtaining clarification are relatively straightforward. Additional emphasis on writing style, clarity, and staff review of outgoing messages would not be an effective utilization of staff time. It is possible that the current headquarters efforts in review and editing of these messages could be reduced, although none of the data collected in this project could be used to support or refute this statement. However, it is suggested that supervisory personnel responsible for these review procedures consider alternative review techniques with a view to reducing the time expended.

The major communication problems described in this report seem to reflect a lack of some pertinent information at both the headquarters and installation levels. Some operating personnel offices have a limited view of the forces and pressures applied to the Office of Civilian Personnel,

Department of Army, from various other sections of the government. The headquarters office seems to have a limited view of pressures applied at the local operating office. Headquarters personnel who seem to be less prone to these pitfalls tend to be those who have recently been working at an operating office or who have had opportunities to visit these operating offices. Similarly, the better informed staff members of operating offices either have recently been working at a headquarters or have visited with the headquarters staff. The members of OCP who currently have most frequent contact with a range of operating offices are those at the OCP Field Offices. These men are not the key personnel in writing program directives. Although the field office staff obtain useful information when they are members of an inspection team, the attitudes of the local staff toward the "inspector" are not generally ones that would encourage candid discussions of local problems.

It is therefore suggested that the action officers who are responsible for the generation and writing of program policy should be required to spend some time each year in visiting operating personnel offices. These visits should not be formalized in terms of evaluating the local program, but should be structured to permit free interchange of information about problem areas. Visits of this kind are currently made to a limited degree at certain convenient installations. The visits should not be limited to the installations near scenic attractions and large cities. Problems in communication in the Army personnel system seem to be more prevalent at some of the remote installations.

Several informal news letter types of written material, such as News and Notes, are currently being sent to the local offices. This type of communication which provides the installation office with general background information about personnel policies is considered a valuable addition to the communication network. This communication technique should be continued and perhaps expanded.

One of the problems mentioned in previous sections of the report concerns ways in which the installation staff can be reinforced by the headquarters staff for excellent performance. Most of the current reinforcing mechanisms are available to the immediate supervisor, the

Commanding Officer, to the evaluation teams, and possibly to the command staff office. The Office of Civilian Personnel has limited opportunity to reward superior performance by a Civilian Personnel Officer except through the inspection processes or through the Career Program. These two reward systems cannot be used as frequently as would be desirable to obtain positive attitudes toward OCP or to generally motivate the local staff. Many of the direct contacts of the headquarters office with local offices are occasioned by a mistake made at the local level. There seem to be more ways in which headquarters can object to local office actions than there are ways it can applaud installation programs.

Therefore, one of the barriers to effective communication within this network appears to be the difficulty of the policy generating office to reinforce the individuals who must apply these policies. This is a particularly critical problem when the policy to be transmitted requires action by the local office which does not directly improve the local personnel program. One of the reasons that the local installations were positively oriented to the YOC program was that this program provided a direct, visible service to the local community and to the installation. They were not as enthusiastic about the career re-registration program, since its effect upon the local civilian employees cannot be as directly and immediately observed.

Additional mechanisms for reinforcing the local staffs by OCP are not easy to specify. If the OCP staff recognizes this problem and if they are encouraged to have more personal contacts with local offices as has been previously suggested, there should be improvement in this aspect of the Army personnel program.

Suggested Research Areas

The principal problem in designing studies of communication effectiveness involves the determination of criteria for the measurement of effectiveness. One possible criterion would involve a measure of the clarity of the message as viewed by the recipient who must respond. This criterion is estimated to produce relatively small variation within the Army civilian personnel setting, since in the case study phase of the project

few differences in understanding and interpretation of the sample messages were discovered. Although dramatic instances of particular importance can be described by key OCP staff members, the absolute frequency of important misunderstandings is estimated to be small.

Another problem in designing experiments within the Army communication system is the difficulty of transmitting different messages to comparable installations. Since most written communications are transmitted through specified channels, it would be difficult to send alternate messages to two installations within the same channel without also transmitting the information that this was an experimental procedure and that the response to it would be evaluated intensively. The effect of knowing that a message has peculiar importance to headquarters has been demonstrated to affect the responses to the communication.

The classes of criteria that appear to hold most promise for the experimental evaluation of the communications network include: (1) the timeliness of the response; (2) the relevance and appropriateness of the response information; (3) the appropriateness of the planning to achieve the goals of the program; (4) the attitudes and enthusiasm developed at the operating level for a new program; and (5) the operation of the program itself. For particular communications only a selected number of criteria could be applied in evaluating the basic communications.

The suggested method for transmitting different information to comparable installations for experimental purposes is to supplement information selectively through informal communication channels to particular operating offices. Although the technique was initially proposed for an experiment during the first year's effort, a delay in authorization for sending the basic communication required that this experiment be abandoned.

To illustrate the techniques proposed, this planned procedure is described. The program to be used in this experiment concerned a change in the payment permitted military personnel for adopted suggestions. Evaluations of the differences in number of suggestions obtained or adopted as a function of communication supplements were to be made. The planned supplementary procedures were aimed at the concept that nonroutine expression of interest in a program by OCP staff is effective in stimulating

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interest and emphasis at an operating personnel office. Selected offices were to be sent a letter and other offices a telephone call expressing such interest at OCP. Other offices, matched in terms of previous military involvement in the suggestion program, would not be contacted by either letter or telephone. Variations in response to the new program by the military and the operating office at these differentially informed bases could be ascertained.

The usefulness and applicability of this kind of experimental study depend upon the particular programs being instituted during a particular time period. The subject matter of the communication to be systematically supplemented is not as critical as the method of measuring the effect of the supplementary techniques.

In the experimental phase of this project two different criterion measuring techniques were used. Ratings by headquarters staff of a written narrative paragraph from the field provided a useful measure of these responses. However, there certainly can be a question raised as to the relationship of the written narrative paragraph to other descriptive measures of the installation program. The experiment concerning nominations to the training courses used the characteristics of the nominated individuals as recorded in the career files as the criterion information. Although significant differences were not found between the nominated groups, the criterion did provide useful information for comparing the groups. It is concluded that these kinds of experimental procedures are feasible in this context to measure variation in effectiveness of responses to communications.

In designing additional and more complex experimental work in the Army civilian personnel setting, it is important to attend to two separate considerations. First, the study should be capable of generating general principles for improving communication effectiveness. And second, the subject matter context of the study should be a part of an important and representative personnel program. The next paragraph illustrates these considerations by referring to aspects of the current project.

If the change in nominating procedures for training courses proves to be effective in enrolling better qualified personnel officers, then

OCP may want to increase the involvement of the command personnel staff
in supervising other selected personnel programs. Then a general prin-
ciple of communicating from headquarters to the installation would be
generated. However, if headquarters considers an improvement of quali-
fications of the nominees as a special case and, therefore, would not
consider using this change in operating procedures for other personnel
programs, then the subject matter of this experiment would not be appro-
priate for intensive research use.

Therefore, it is important for the research staff to plan additional
experiments in close conjunction with the administrative staff. The
initial year's effort was focused on defining the problems and illustrating
the feasibility of applying research methodology to the problems. The
next steps are to generate more crucial studies that can provide helpful
directions for change in communication procedures.

Since the headquarters staff plays such an important part in the
selection of subject matter areas for further research, the following
brief descriptions of topics that could be used for additional research
efforts is considered neither final nor exhaustive of the possibilities.

Usefulness of Narrative Reports. In reading a variety of narrative
reports at installations, the project staff questions the usefulness of
much of the information included in narrative reports. Alternative ways
of collecting this kind of information included in narrative reports
could be devised and evaluated. For example, multiple response questions
directed at the key information requirements might be attempted. Changes
in the procedures for summarizing and consolidating the reports could be
evaluated. It is suggested that a study of information requirements and
the use of the information contained in various narrative reports could
assist in delineating the kinds of information most effectively collected
by narrative reporting requirements and the kinds of information that
should be obtained from other reporting procedures. It has been suggested
that one useful function served by the quarterly narrative report is to
provide the installation CPO with an opportunity to review his person-
nel program with his commanding officer. Alternate ways of providing this
type of internal review of a program could be devised to evaluate the
importance of the narrative for this purpose.

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Attitudes of Careerists toward the Career Program. In discussing
problems of re-registration of careerists with personnel specialists,
a large number of questions concerning the actual working of the career
program were raised. A special study of the career management program
has been conducted recently by a task group within the Army. One of
the recommendations of this task group provides more autonomy to the
Functional Chief for the development of the program. A demonstration
project has been organized in the Controller Career Field. If varia-
tion in the administration of career fields is instituted, and if these
changes are communicated to registrants, the attitudes of the career-
ists toward the program will be of importance to the Functional Chief.
Ways of communicating information concerning the administration of the
career program will constitute a major problem. The study of selected
career fields in terms of attitudes toward the program and the influence
of information about the administrative procedures could develop prin-
ciples of communication which would be applicable to many other areas
of communication. It is suggested that this complex research area would
require utilization of measurements of current attitudes of careerists
in at least two different career fields. There could then be experimental
introduction of information for one group of careerists, while the
other group would not obtain such additional communication. The subse-
quent measurement of attitudes could provide criterion data for evaluating
the experimental program. The feasibility of using this subject matter
for a research effort is partially dependent upon the revisions to this
program that are in the planning stage.

Use of Informal Communications. Directives frequently are sent to
operating civilian personnel offices asking for specific information.
The usefulness of this information for the receiving headquarters is not
always apparent to the field personnel. It is suggested that specific
efforts could be made to evaluate the effect of providing background in-
formation such as the alternatives considered by headquarters or the ways
in which the data will be used. This could then be related to the time-
liness, quality and accuracy of feedback reports. The study of career
field management could be adapted within this framework.

In the visits to AMC installations the question of usefulness of
the Talent Bank information was invariably asked. When this question

was posed to the AMC headquarters personnel staff, specific instances were related where the Talent Bank information was used. The communication of this type of feedback information to the operating offices would also provide a chance to evaluate changes in attitudes of field personnel.

There is one principal advantage in evaluating by experimental techniques changes made in communication procedures. When a message describes a new program or new procedure, experimental evaluation of the effects of the communication will provide information useful in guiding the headquarters staff in communicating future changes. When changes are made in communication procedures without systematically evaluating the effects of these changes, improvements are unlikely from year to year in communicating new programs. However, when systematic evaluations are made, predictions about the probable effect of a communication technique can materially assist in improving the effectiveness of communications.

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